

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

Remote Meeting

Thursday, December 16, 2021

8:30 am – 10:00 am

Minutes

Name	Organization	Name	Organization
Adam Harr	City of Portland	Norm Maze	Shalom House
Jim Devine	HVJ	Ben Martineau	HVJ
Jenny Stasio	Through These Doors	Dan Coyne	United Way
Terence Miller	Preble Street	Sarah Michniewicz	BNA
Amy Geren	Portland Downtown	Brian Townsend	Amistad
Ginny Dill	Office of Behavioral Health	Hannah Brier	United Way
Cullen Ryan	CHOM	Vickey Rand	CHOM
Aaron Geyer	City of Portland	Oliver Bradeen	Milestone
Mary Cook	TOA	Ben Strick	Spurwink
Victoria Volent	CoP	Mailyss Day	PHA
Suzanne Randall	HA4All	Mike Guthrie	CoP FS
Bill Higgins	HA4All		

Meeting Summary

The meeting opened with announcements on the Homeless Persons Memorial Vigil which is on December 21, 2021 and the HOME-ARP Consultation Meeting on January 11th at 10:00 AM to get provider input on the \$3.5 ARPA funding the City of Portland and Cumberland County got to address homelessness. Spurwink's Living Room Crisis Center is set to open in February. There is ongoing dialogue of how the role of the statistics at the meeting and it was decided to discuss further at a meeting next year while assigning who will read the statistics 12 months out for providers to be prepared as well as pushing the deadline to send the data to Adam to two Mondays before the meeting so he can share the stats by the Friday before the meeting to give enough time for people to synthesize the data and bring questions to the meeting. Shelters were also asked to provide the length of stay that their housing placements represent.

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

PIT Count is January 25th with three service days following. Winter warming center plan will be posted on the City's website with an alert when a temperature threshold is met; an additional space for 25 people during the day is needed. TOA took over ERA with 188 people enrolled and is working through a backlog; they are asking MaineHousing about entering into HMIS as ERA and GA placements will influence the PIT count; service day forms can also capture this but with a large administrative burden.

The moratorium on new shelters in Bayside was lifted and Shelter Licensing passed but a vote to reconsider was approved and there will be a workshop on January 5th and a vote on the 19th. The developer of the HSC held a meeting to get feedback and will hold future workshops on the site plan, layout and design, and operations. Providers are working to reduce the calls for service in South Portland hotels, including working with MaineHousing to contract an additional hotel to have staffing. The ability to shelter people in hotels with FEMA finding has been extended through April first. The continuing resolution means funding is shrinking due to inflation. The state is going into the second half of the biennial on January 5th and will consider 500 bills, 150 of which are new.

November Meeting Minutes

- Terrence moved to approve the minutes and Ben seconded. The motion passed with none opposed.
- **Announcements**
 - The Annual Homeless Persons Memorial Vigil is December 21, 2021
 - Gather outside the learning collaborative at 4:30 with a procession to monument square to recognize those who passed away in the community over the past year.
 - HOME-ARP Consultation Meeting
 - meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 11, from 10:00 - 11:00 via Zoom. Information about the funding program can be found at the link below. <https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/OCHCO/documents/2021-10cpdn.pdf>
 - \$3.5 million for the City of Portland and Cumberland County to address homelessness (HOME American Rescue Plan)
 - For individuals and families who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, fleeing DV or at the greatest risk of housing instability.
 - Spurwink working to open the Living Room Crisis Center in February, slightly delayed from the anticipated January opening.
- **November Statistics**
 - Some providers have expressed not going over the stats and to email out and talk if there are questions.
 - Some feel it is important to go over the stats at the meeting.
 - We have voted to not read the stats at the meetings before.
 - We should speak to it at the January of February meeting.

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

- What are we here for if we don't go over the statistics?
- The statistics are valuable when they foster dialogue.
- The statistics are important and is there a way to look at trends.
 - First time homeless seem to be
- With the rotating reporting, the folks don't have a mastery of the numbers.
 - What is the role supposed to be and do a 12 month schedule.
- The CoC board of directors is looking statewide for data and making data dashboards for the hubs.
 - Biggest performance measure is housing
 - Missing lengths of stay before people are housed.
- Make the shelter data deadline the 2 Mondays before the meeting so Adam can send the stats out by the Friday before the meeting.
- **Winter Planning and PIT Count Update**
 - PIT Count is January 25th is night of the count but will be doing service based days wed-Friday Jan 28th to capture who slept out but was not seen the night of the count.
 - Stakeholders are being sent letters to recruit volunteers.
 - Find PIT crew leaders for each area.
 - An alert will go out when a certain temperature threshold has been reached to show how to access warming centers/resources.
 - Space for people to go is still a challenge.
 - Space for around 25 people to be opened as a daytime warming station that is above and beyond what we currently have.
 - Does anyone have a space they are willing to open about 5 days a year?
They have a plan to be able to staff it.
 - Plan will be posted on the City website when finalized.
- **ERA Update**
 - TOA is taking over hotel assistance provided by GA.
 - Processing applications from early October.
 - Adding staff capacity to take on caseload.
 - Unable to get people to hotel assistance immediately due to a backlog.
 - Working on data sharing.
 - Enrolled 100 people from GA into ERA
 - 88 people receiving hotel assistance not referred from GA.
 - Sending an email to providers with clear guidance on helping people navigate ERA and to clients receiving ERA and how to maintain eligibility.
 - People cannot get into hotels immediately and please spread that message to people going to their office.
 - GA decision sheets save time documenting income.
 - Reasonable accommodation practice is still in the works.
 - Will this go into HMIS to have accurate data?
 - Will ask MaineHousing; TOA does have an HMIS license so there is an argument to be made.

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

- This is a discussion to have in advance of the PIT.
 - ERA will make our count low.
 - Survey forms can capture this with added administrative burden.
- **Shelter Licensing Update and Bayside Moratorium Lifted**
 - Shelter Licensing passed but a vote to reconsider was approved and there will be a workshop on January 5th and a vote on the 19th.
 - People feel there is no desire for control over any aspect of shelter and what happened in Bayside could happen anywhere. The impression of things being unmanageable in Bayside is pervasive. Not having licensing will not make it easier to open shelters in other areas.
 - The moratorium on new shelters in Bayside was lifted.
- **Calls for Service in South Portland Hotels Update**
 - Hotels in South Portland are used for overflow.
 - Leadership in South Portland showed a large increase in calls for service. Providers are working to decrease calls for service through coordination and staffing an additional hotel.
 - Proposal to MaineHousing to set up a second contract similar to the OSS contracted hotel.
- **Update on the Homeless Services Center**
 - Developers collaborative hosted a meeting this week.
 - Sought feedback that may impact the actual design of the building as construction starts soon.
 - Looking for partners to refine the existing management plan.
 - Ended abruptly but has a sense for an ongoing effort through periodic meetings to inform the construction and design team.
 - Possibly three workshops:
 - Site plan,
 - Layout and design,
 - Operations.
 - There is thoughtful inclusion of widespread input.
 - Questions remained and we are looking for follow-up.
 - Reality of substance use of people seeking emergency shelter.
 - Dueling obligations to law and the populations we are trying to serve.
- **Legislative Update**
 - **State**
 - Going into the second half of the biennial on January 5th; will consider 500 bills, 150 of which are new.
 - Homeless policy committee working on requests for the next biennial session in January 2023; about ten pieces of legislation covering homelessness.
 - Is there a greater chance with the revenue forecast?

Emergency Shelter Assessment Committee

- Hopefully the case but they may say localities have ARPA finding instead.
- **Federal**
 - Ability to shelter people in Hotels/FEMA funding extended through 4/1/22.
 - Continuing resolution through February 18th.
 - Staying at the same funding level is hurt by inflation.
 - Senate FY 22 T-HUD Budget smaller than House.
 - Build Back Better has \$150 Billion in affordable housing investments and \$150 million in home and community based services.
 - Would be the largest investments we will see in our careers.

Meeting ended at approximately 9:35 AM